

Message Text

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E.O. 11652

TAGS:PFOR, GE, UR, EEWT

SUBJECT: GDR AND SOVIET REACTIONS TO TRADE ACT

1. ON JANUARY 28, I ATTENDED A FAREWELL RECEPTION OF AMBASSADOR LLINAS OLARTE OF COLOMBIA, WHO IS LEAVING FOR LEBANON.

2. I WAS INTRODUCED TO NEWLY-ARRIVED SOVIET DCM ANATOLY GROMYKO, WHO ADDRESSED ME AS "AMBASSADOR-SENATOR", SAYING HE HAD MET ME IN WASHINGTON. HE WAS TALKATIVE, STRESSING HIS VISITS TO THE U.S. AND ACQUAINTANCESHIP WITH MANY MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS. HE NOTED THAT OUR CONGRESS IS AN INDEPENDENT BODY, MADE OF MEMBERS OF VARYING VIEWPOINTS, SAID IT HAD BEEN QUITE "NAUGHTY" ON THE TRADE REFORM ACT, BUT IT WAS HOPED THAT EXPERIENCE WOULD CAUSE ITS MODIFICATION. GROMYKO TOLD ME THAT THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HAD RETURNED THAT AFTERNOON (JANUARY 28) FROM MOSCOW, AND THAT HE (GROMYKO) WANTED TO CALL ON DCM GROVE AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE, BECAUSE GOOD RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN U.S.-SOVIET EMBASSIES ARE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. SOVIET EMBASSY CALLED THIS MORNING (JANUARY 29) AND GROMYKO WILL SEE DCM JANUARY 30.

3. IMMEDIATELY AFTER MY TALK WITH GROMYKO, DEP FOREIGN
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MINISTER GRUNERT SPOKE TO ME SAYING THAT GDR FOREIGN

MINISTER FISCHER HAD RETURNED FROM MOSCOW THE SAME DAY. GRUNERT VOLUNTEERED THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN POLICY OF DETENTE AND THAT NEWS STORIES TO THE CONTRARY HAD BEEN OVERPLAYED BY THE PRESS. HE DID SAY THAT IT WAS POSITION OF GDR THAT CONGRESS SHOULD MODIFY THE ACT AS EXPERIENCE DEVELOPS.

4. THE CONJUNCTION OF THE VISITS TO MOSCOW BY FISCHER AND SOVIET AMBASSADOR JEFREMOW, AND THE SIMILARITY OF GRUNERT'S AND GROMYKO'S COMMENTS ON THE STABILITY OF DETENTE -- BUT WITH EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE THE CONGRESS WOULD MODIFY THE TRADE ACT -- MAY RESULT IN QUESTIONS FROM GDR AND SOVIET AMBASSADOR WHETHER ANY CONCRETE STEPS ARE CONTEMPLATED BY ADMINISTRATION TOWARD SEEKING SOME REVISIONS OF THE ACT.

5. KNOWING THE STRONG LEADERSHIP OF THOSE WHO SPONSORED WHAT I CONSIDER HARSH AMENDMENTS, AND THE SLOWNESS OF CONGRESS TO ACT, DOES THE ADMINISTRATION HAVE ANY VIEWS AT PRESENT CONCERNING POSSIBLE MODIFICATION OR MEANS BY WHICH A LIBERAL INTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN SECTIONS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT FLAUNTING THE INTENT OF CONGRESS AND CREATING AN ADVERSE RESPONSE? I REALIZE THE QUESTION MAY BE PREMATURE, AND IF ASKED BY GDR OR SOVIET AMBASSADOR I WOULD NOT SAY ANYTHING TO CREATE MISCONCEPTIONS. ALL THAT I WOULD SAY AT PRESENT IS THAT CONGRESS CAN MODIFY IF IT SO DETERMINES WITH THE ASSISTANCE AND INFLUENCE PROVIDED BY CONSULTATIONS WITH THE SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT. EXPERIENCE WITH THE ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT, AND APPRAISAL OF CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATION OF U.S. RESOURCES WOULD BE A FACTOR. I ASSUME THAT ADMINISTRATION WOULD LIKE A MODIFICATION OF THE ACT BUT ANY GUIDANCE ON THIS ISSUE WOULD BE HELPFUL.

6. I HAVE READ TODAY THE TEXT OF THE SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE OF JANUARY 28, WHICH IS OF GREAT HELP.COOPER

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